**Differences Between Blackboard and Canvas**

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| **Blackboard** | **Canvas** | **Function** | **How is Canvas Different?** |
| **Announcements** | **Announcements** | Communication with students about course events, content availability, course schedule changes, etc. | * Add links to course content, images, files, etc. * Students receive notifications via text messages, social media, email, etc. * Instructors cannot force announcements to be emailed out to students. * Announcements are linked to Discussions. Students can respond to an Announcement to continue the discussion. * Announcements appear in Canvas’ news stream on the User Dashboard welcome screen. * Can create announcements automatically from an RSS feed. |
| **Assignments** | **Assignments** | The Assignments area gives students a place to submit graded work. Submitted assignments are time and date stamped; it's clear to both students and faculty when and if work has been submitted. The Speed Grader is tied to each Assignment. Assignments are automatically added to the Calendar and the course’s Syllabus area. | * Assignments can be any graded item or even just something you wish to record in the Gradebook. * Create Assignment Groups to categorize work or tasks such as attendance, discussions, papers, quizzes, etc. All groups can be used to create a weighted total for the final grade. * You enable digital submissions where students can input the assignment, upload files, provide a URL, or create media recordings. * Students can submit their work for an Assignment and Canvas will track their submissions. * You can designate Assignments as group work, customize the settings, and require peer reviews. Canvas will aid you in creating groups and peer reviewers. * Assignments are automatically added to the Calendar and Syllabus. |
| **Availability** Control Panel > Settings > Course Availability | **Published** Course Setup Checklist> Publish Course | Instructors control when a course is launched. By default, courses are not accessible to students when first created. | * Canvas courses first appear as "unpublished" and instructors must "publish" their course for students to access it. * Publishing a course is irreversible once students have submitted work. * You can "conclude" your Canvas course at the end of a semester and switch it to a read-only mode. |
| **Calendar** | **Calendar** | Help students and faculty know what is due when in all of their classes | * Copy the calendar feed link into any calendar app that takes iCal feeds (Google Calendar, iCal, Outlook, etc.) * Drag & drop items on calendar to make changes in dates. Any change made is applied automatically everywhere in Canvas. * View up to 10 classes at once with color-coded global calendar view. * Dates are automatically populated from assignments. * Each user also has a personal calendar for events that aren’t class-related. * Calendar items will be listed the Syllabus automatically. |
| **Course Menu** Control Panel > Manage Course Menu | **Course Menu** Settings > Navigation | Provide links to different course areas. These areas can contain content, link to features or tools and provide a quick link to the Gradebook. | * Canvas does not let you create unique course navigation menu links nor rename existing menu links. * You can hide menu items from students via Settings> Navigation, then drag the menu items downwards. * Any menu button with zero content has its name in gray until activity starts there. |
| **Course Documents** (or other content areas) | **Modules** | Modules are a way to organize your course.  They can be based on dates or on content.  They provide a place to link to all of the activities associated with a topic or week – faculty notes, files, quizzes, Canvas Pages, links to external URLs, Assignments, etc. | * Drag and drop for ordering modules and module content. * Can set module prerequisites and module completion requirements. * Can require students to go through module requirements sequentially; you customize what counts as completing a module. * Modules can be "locked" until a given date. * You can hide other navigation buttons like Quizzes from students and simply post everything in modules. * Modules are the primary organizational tool within Canvas. |
| **Course Documents** (or other content areas) | **Pages** | Pages are a way to gather together or create different types of content. Pages can also be turned into wikis. | * Pages exist in Canvas courses as a way to create and hold content and educational resources that are part of your course. * Pages can be repeatedly used across your course or referred to in multiple Assignments or modules--you can post the same page in multiple places and by editing it once, you’ve updated it everywhere. * If you customize the Home Page Layout of your Canvas course, you'll be creating a special page named Front Page. * Pages can include text, video, links to your files. YouTube and other web videos automatically embed on a Page. * Pages can be linked to other Pages. If you’ve ever used a wiki, this is essentially a wiki with a more usable interface. * Page history is saved and accessible so that former versions of a page can be used. * Pages can be restricted to teacher-only editing or teacher and student editing. |
| **Discussion Board** | **Discussions; Topics** | Discussions enable two-way communication between faculty and students and between students and students.  The discussion area can be used as a "lecture" area for faculty, for peer review, and as a place for students to communicate with each other. | * You can easily drag & drop to reorder topics. * Add links to course content, images, files, etc. * Receive notifications via social web services, text messaging, email, etc. * Canvas permits threaded discussions. * The Discussions Index Page is organized into three main areas: Discussions, Pinned Discussions, and Closed for Comments Discussions. |
| **Email** | **Conversations** (accessed via the Inbox) | Conversations are a private, two-way communication tool for large or smaller groups or individuals that is similar to email. | * Private messages appear in your Conversations inbox. Depending on how you set up your Notifications in your profile, you can receive alerts about these messages. * Discussion responses can be accessed from Conversations. * Comments students make as they turn in work are automatically copied to your Conversations inbox. * Messages can include file attachments, webcam recordings, audio or video uploads, or just text. * Messages can be sent to any of your classes from Conversations. * Any Canvas user can use Conversations to write a message to any other Canvas user. No shared courses necessary. |
| **Files**  (or other content areas) | **Files** | Files is a file management area where you can organize and upload files that will be used in your course. | * The Files area of your course can be made available to students. * You can create folders to organize materials; folders can be locked so that you can avoid locking each item inside the folder. * Drag and drop files into the order you desire or into folders. * All files in this area can downloaded as a .zip file. * You can upload a .zip file to this area and Canvas will unzip it for you. |
| **Grade Center** | **Grades** | Maintains grades for students.  Grade columns are automatically created as assignments and quizzes are created. | * Grades is part of the User Dashboard displayed when you first log in; it displays overall grades and stats from all courses. * In the course-specific Grades, students can easily calculate hypothetical grades. * Easily sort columns in one click by due date or assignment group. * Message students who haven't submitted yet, scored less than or more/less than a certain criterion on an assignment. * Download submissions from the grades area or just view them online in Canvas. * Employ text or media comments to provide assessment feedback. * Columns for Assignment groups are shaded, and appear at far right of Gradebook by default |
| **Rubrics** | **Rubrics** | Rubrics help students to more clearly understand faculty expectations around assignments, particularly written or multi-media assignments. | * Ease of use -- drag feature to add columns. Click to add a criterion. * Ability to add media comments and integration with SpeedGrader interface. * You can always override the grade the rubric produces. |
| **Groups** | **Collaboration** | Collaboration provides a location within the LMS for students to organize and participate in group activities. | * Automatically connects students for collaborative activities. * Uses a variety of web-based applications such as GoogleDocs and EtherPad. |
| **Inline Grading** (powered by Crocodoc) | **SpeedGrader**  (powered by Crocodoc) | The Speed Grader is tied to each Assignment, Test, graded Topic or other Assignment. This is a very flexible tool that allows faculty to grade more quickly using rubrics, but still add comments in written and multimedia formats. | * Grade all submissions for an Assignment quickly in one place. Grade tests too--you can provide feedback to individual questions, even for multiple choice tests. * iPad app is available for the SpeedGrader. * Record audio and video feedback for each student assignment. * Sort students so that you work on them alphabetically, by submission date, or anonymously, or by whether or not they’ve submitted the assignment. |
| **Notifications Dashboard** | **Notifications** (under Profile, at top right when you first log in) | Notifications allow students and faculty to tell Canvas how they want to be communicated with and how often that communication should occur. | * Receive notifications via email (Baylor and/or personal email address). * Receive notifications via text messaging and social networks like Twitter and Facebook. * Designate the frequency of alerts. |
| **Tests, Surveys,  and Pools** | **Quizzes** | Quizzes are the assessment function of Canvas that allows instructors to create and administer exams within the LMS. | * A quiz can either be associated with an assignment group or by itself. * All quiz options are on the same page as you are creating the quiz. * You can hide the Quiz navigation area from students altogether via Settings and post your quizzes in modules. * Quizzes must be “published” for students to take them. * Respondus can be used to create and upload tests, surveys, and question pools; as well as to extract them from Blackboard. |
| **Syllabus** | **Syllabus** | The Syllabus area provides a place to link to your full course syllabus or a page to include your syllabus' text, and also includes an automatically generated table of assignments and quizzes. | * Connected to course calendar. * Provides organizational view of course based on assignment and quiz due dates. * Interactive document linked to assignments, quizzes, grades, and calendar dates. |